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Detroit Edison customers soon to be locked out of electric choice

Electric customers across the state suffer because of 2008 electric laws

The holiday season is upon us and Detroit Edison electric customers will soon be handed a lump of coal as DTE nears the 10 percent cap on electric choice customers in their service area.

“When passed last year, supporters insisted competition and choice were kept alive because 10 percent of each major utility’s load was allowed to move to competitive companies,” said Barry Cargill, executive director of the Customer Choice Coalition. “Now, just 13 months later, Consumers Energy has met their limit and Detroit Edison is currently at more than 8 percent and expects to reach their limit within the next few days. The utilities retain 90 percent of the electric customer load in their respective regions and customers are stuck with no option; the Electric Remonopolization Act of 2008 is proving to be a major failure for customers and a major win for the utilities.”

Only 10 percent of the customer load is allowed to move away from the high-charging utilities, a provision demanded by the two utilities, which were unwilling to compete against lower priced electric providers.

“The Michigan Public Service Commission announced recently more than 377,000 customers across the state have chosen an alternative natural gas supplier, setting a new record in Michigan. If choice is a good option for natural gas customers, why isn’t the same true for the electric market?” Cargill continued. “Both gas and electric choice is lowering costs and improving economic opportunities for Michigan businesses and residents. The disparity between the industries is puzzling.”

The Customer Choice Coalition is the only group that brings together customers of all sizes with competitive electric companies to support electric competition and choice. For more information visit www.stopthemonopoly.com or www.customerchoicecoalition.org.

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